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THE

BRITISH CRITIC,

A NEW REVIEW,

FOR

JANUARY, FEBRUARY, MARCH, APRIL, MAY, AND JUNE.

M DCC XCVI.

Αἰεὶ δ' ἀμφ' ἀρεταῖσι πόνος δαπάνα τε μάρναται, πρὸς
Ἔργων κινδύνῳ κεκαλυμμένον.
Εὖ δὲ ἔχοντες, σοφοὶ καὶ πολίταις ἔδοξαν ἔμμεν. PIND.

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PREFACE.

THE Hiſtorian of the triumphs of Literature incurs no danger, at the preſent day, of wanting materials for his narrative. Notwithſtanding the apparently adverſe ſtate of things, the pens of our countrymen are far from idle; and letters, as well as commerce, ſtruggle with ſucceſs againſt the unavoidable diſadvantages of general war. For ſeveral months it has been neceſſary for us to contract our account of foreign publications, in order to keep pace, in any degree, with thoſe of *Engliſh growth*; and though among the multitude there certainly are many trivial, and many bad performances, which require or deſerve no honorary notice, yet the proportion ſeems to be preſerved, and we have full as much to praiſe, at the termination of each period, as we could in reaſon expect. Should the return of quiet and ſecurity, whenever Providence ſhall grant thoſe bleſſings, excite proportionable efforts, we ſhall indeed behold a golden Age of Science; but this perhaps is more than we can reaſonably expect; the great diſpoſer of events exerciſes us with adverſity for our improvement,—"curis acuit mortalia corda," and ſhould we keep our energy unbroken in the halcyon days of eaſe, it may perhaps be owing, in no ſmall degree, to the ſtruggle which at once afflicts our minds, and rouſes their activity. We begin our account, as uſual, with that which is the firſt, in ſome eſſential points of dignity and value,

DIVINITY.

In this branch, two important works which were briefly mentioned in our laſt Preface, demand alſo to be noticed here. Theſe are, *Dr. Macknight's* Tranſlation of *the Apoſtolic Epiſtles**, and the compilation entitled *the Scholar armed*†. Our critical account of theſe has now been concluded, and of the former, we are enabled to ſay, that it is a work of theological labour not often paralleled, and an ample ſtore-houſe of obſervations to exerciſe not only the ſtudent, but the adept in divinity. If we do not always implicitly coincide with the author in opinion (which, in ſuch various matter, cannot reaſonably be expected), we can always praiſe his diligence, his learning, and his piety; qualities which confer no trifling rank on any ſcriptural interpreter, or commentator. *The Scholar armed* contains ſome tracts, which, as long as true Chriſtianity ſhall ſubſiſt, muſt be held in high eſteem, and to which we truſt the account we have laid before our readers will attract the public attention. From a Biſhop of acknowledged learning and abilities, the hoſtile attack of Paine upon Chriſtianity, has called forth a moſt judicious and concluſive *Apology*‡; in the excellence of which we almoſt loſe our regret at the coarſe obloquy and ridicule with which the demagogue had endeavoured to overwhelm the object of his fear and hatred. After this, we have no apprehenſion but for thoſe who are incapable of diſtinguiſhing obloquy and ridicule from argument; but theſe unfortunately compoſe a very numerous claſs, always prepared to be the prey of any Paine, or any pretender, in religion or in politics. Among controverſial divinity, a conſpicuous place is due to the volumes of Dr. *Jamieſon* on *the Deity of Chriſt* §; in

* No. I. p. 46. † No. I. p. 170. ‡ *Biſhop Watſon's Apology for the Bible*, No. VI. p. 648. § No. IV. p. 376.

which

which the author very powerfully combats and expoſes the miſrepreſentations of Dr. Prieſtley in his Hiſtory of Early Opinions. *Mr. Weſton's Conjectures and Comments* on the New and Old Teſtament*, are the memorandums of a polite and intelligent ſcholar, and though they are not all important enough to demand publication, there are few among them that can fairly be ſaid not to deſerve it. The *Introduction to the Principles of natural and revealed Religion*†, which Mr. *Plumptre* has compoſed chiefly from the learned work of Dr. Jenkin, is, like his former publication on the Hiſtory of religious Knowledge‡, a moſt inſtructive and pleaſing manual, for ſuch readers as require initiation in theological ſtudies: and we truſt that the ſame zeal and intelligence which have incited and enabled him to make theſe preſents to the Chriſtian world, will give birth to other eſſays of a like beneficial nature. Such a friend to Chriſtianity, when its enemies are ſo numerous and active, cannot be too much encouraged or employed. Of a ſimilar kind, but rather too ſimilar to be attributed to the ſame author, is an *Eſſay on the Neceſſity of revealed Religion*§, which, in a ſtill narrower compaſs, conveys the ſame ſpecies of information as may be found in the books of Jenkin and Plumptre. A particular doctrine, which has been, among others, the object of attack from Dr. Prieſtley, the doctrine of Atonement, is ably expounded and defended in the volume of *Bampton Lectures*, which Mr. *Veyſie*‖ publiſhed, in compliance with the rules of that inſtitution. Three volumes of miſcellaneous *Sermons*, the poſthumous work of *Dr. Carr*¶, rector of St. Andrew Underſhaft, form a valuable acceſſion to that extenſive claſs of theological productions; nor can the ſingle volume, publiſhed by the *Warden of Wincheſter***, fail to be received in a manner ſuitable to the well-known talents of the author.

* No. V. p. 531. † No. I. p. 9. ‡ See Brit. Crit. Vol. V. p. 76. § No. V. p. 492. ‖ No. IV. p. 394. ¶ No. II. p. 124. ** Dr. Huntingford, No. III. p. 293.

Of ſingle ſermons there are always more than we can conveniently notice or recapitulate, but among theſe we think it juſt to point out to obſervation *Dr. Layard's* preached at St. Paul's*; Dean *Berkeley's* on Epiſcopacy†; that of the *Biſhop of Cheſter*, on the eternal Generation‡; *Dr. Croſt's* on Methodiſts§; and *Mr. Jones's* on Imagination‖. Biſhop *Skinner's* two Diſcourſes¶, on the preſence of Chriſt in places of Chriſtian worſhip, do honour to a ſociety long loſt in unjuſt obſcurity, the Epiſcopal Church of Scotland: and with this conciſe enumeration, we ſhall allow ourſelves to conclude this part of our account.

METAPHYSICS.

So neceſſary are ſound Metaphyſics to the accompliſhment of the able divine, and ſo ſeldom does the metaphyſician abſtain entirely from the province of the ſpeculative theologian, that we ſhall ſubjoin this claſs to that with which we have commenced our ſurvey. That hardy veteran in this field, *Lord Monboddo*, continues his great work, full of learning, ingenuity, and paradoxes, entitled *Ancient Metaphyſics***. The fourth volume fell under our notice, and others are promiſed, the appearance of which, conſidering the age and infirmities of the author, may with too much reaſon be doubted.

In a work entitled *Intellectual Phyſics*††, we found an able, though anonymous writer, but one profeſſedly retired from an active life to meditation and ſtudy, endeavouring to clear up the difficult queſtions of the nature of Being, the ſentient principle, and its connection with material objects, ſelf-activity, locality, &c. on all of which he certainly diffuſes ſome light; evincing a mind poſſeſſed at once of acuteneſs

* No. II. p. 196. † No. II. p. 199. ‡ No. III. p. 317.
§ No. IV. p. 431. ‖ No. V. p. 546. ¶ No. V. p. 553.
** No. I p. 11. †† No. V. p. 511.

and

and ſtrength. The *Poſthumous Eſſays* of the celebrated *Dr. Adam Smith**, though imperfect, and having apparent reference to ſome ſyſtem not completed by the author, are elegantly written, and, in moſt reſpects, worthy of his reputation. The memoirs alſo by which they are accompanied, though they by no means exhauſt the ſubject, are acceptable, of courſe, till others more complete can be ſupplied. We have reaſon to believe that a perſon very high in office in this country, could have contributed materially to the perfection of this part of the work.

History.

The firſt volume of *Mr. Maurice's* laborious and very important ancient *Hiſtory of Hindoſtan* having lately been delivered to his ſubſcribers, we gave to it, in two numbers †, a full and careful conſideration. We ſee with pleaſure that the ſpirit of the author does not flag under the extraordinary difficulties to which he is expoſed by the want of proper funds for carrying on a work of ſuch extent, which demands the illuſtration of plates; and, though this age, whatever elſe it may be called, is certainly not the age of patrons, we truſt that Providence will in ſome way beſtow the means of completing a deſign in which religion is ſo nearly concerned. The great diſcovery and the proof, that the remote periods of Indian chronology, which infidels have been ſo eager to oppoſe to the Moſaic hiſtory, are merely fabulous, and a fable which may be traced to its origin and deſign, cannot, we are willing to hope, even in this age, be ſuffered to remain imperfect, from want of liberality in thoſe who ſhould be the ſupporters both of letters and religion. The work is written with elegance and vigour, and the ingenious author draws his proofs from all the ſtores of oriental learning.

* No. VI. p. 665. † No. IV. p. 367. and VI. p. 618.

Of *Mr. Wraxall's Hiſtory of France*, our account was begun ſome time ago *, and would ere now have been completed, in a third article upon the ſubject, but for the ſevere illneſs of the perſon principally employed in drawing it up. We have found reaſon to commend it, but ſhall reſerve our final opinion to our next preface. A brief *Hiſtory of Poland*, the production of an anonymous author, fell under our notice in May laſt †, and deſerved ſome praiſe for the execution. Such accounts, drawn up for temporary purpoſes, whenever a particular country becomes an object of public attention, ſeldom are ſo fit to take their place upon the ſhelves of hiſtory. The *Selection from the Sommers Collection of Tracts* ‡, will be found a book of utility and amuſement to the ſtudent of Engliſh hiſtory; whoſe taſte will, at leaſt, be gratified by orderly arrangement, if his appetite ſhould be only ſtimulated by poſſeſſing ſo ſmall a portion of the whole. *M. Peltier* continues to give us the events of *Paris* §, as they ariſe, well ſelected from the original publications. Another foreigner has ſucceeded in arranging the events of ancient hiſtory, in chronological order, by a method of his own: and the *Chart* of the *Abbé Bertin* ‖, will probably be a conſtant auxiliary to the ſtudies of the riſing generation.

BIOGRAPHY.

In this claſs of more detailed hiſtory we have, at preſent, more articles than uſual to enumerate; and, without weighing the comparative importance of the lives, or ſucceſs of the writers, we ſhall take them as they occur in the order of our numbers. To the ſeveral accounts of our great *Johnſon*, *Dr. Anderſon* ¶, on the occaſion of publiſhing the Engliſh poets col-

* No. IV. p. 341. No. V. p. 531. † No. IV. p. 399.
‡ No. III. p. 326. § No. I. p. 93. ‖ No. IV. p. 450.
¶ No. I. p. 24.

lectively,

lectively, has lately added one which does juſtice to the ſubject, and credit to the writer. This was thought by the publiſhers of ſufficient magnitude and importance to appear in a ſeparate form; but it may be obſerved here, that many more of the lives, ſupplied by the ſame author, are alſo deſerving of attention. *Dumouriez's* account of his *own Life* *, full of the vanity of that lively and once formidable Frenchman, is in general amuſing, and contains ſome ſcenes which, if the facts can be relied on, are in no ſmall degree curious and intereſting. The Life of *Dr. Horne*, by *Mr. Jones* †, is rather a hiſtory of the ſtudies and opinions of the biſhop, than of the tranſactions and occurrences in which he was concerned, or the ſituations to which he was advanced. Even the dates of his ſeveral promotions are omitted, and the author refers for ſuch particulars to Todd's Lives of the Deans of Canterbury. Yet the book is written with the characteriſtic ſpirit of its author, and the appendix contains ſeveral valuable proofs of the piety and ſagacity of the biſhop. But in the claſs of lives the literary world has not, for a long period, ſeen any thing of ſuch intereſt and extent as that of *Lorenzo de' Medici*, by *Mr. Roſcoe* of Liverpool ‡. The man, and the period in which he lived, are both calculated to excite a liberal curioſity; and in what manner it has been gratified by the preſent author, we ſhall expreſs more particularly when our critique ſhall have been concluded. As a kind of ſupplement to his general hiſtory of muſic, *Dr. Burney* has given his *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Metaſtaſio* §; and, as every thing relative to that worthy man and conſpicuous ornament of the preſent century, muſt be intereſting, and the nature of his principal compoſitions connect him ſo cloſely with muſic, no better vehicle for ſuch ſupplemental information could have

* No. II. p. 150. † No. III. p. 257. ‡ No. VI. p. 582
§ No. VI. p. 656.

been

been found. In compiling his work, the partiality of the biographer to his ſubject has, perhaps, induced him to make his extracts from the letters of Metaſtaſio rather too copious; but, in all other reſpects, the conduct of the work is ſuch as the occaſion required, and the expectation of the intelligent reader would demand. The *Life of Milton*, by *Mr. Hayley*, is * a republication of the life prefixed to Boydell's edition of his poems, with a new dedication to Dr. Warton, and ſome few other additions. Two ſhort ſketches of lives in French, deſerve alſo to be mentioned here. Theſe are the *Life* of the late *Dutcheſs of Polignac*, by the ſiſter of the duke†; and that of the *Abbé Barthelemy*, written by the Duke of Nivernois ‡; the former important, as connected intimately with the hiſtory and character of the perſecuted and unfortunate Antoinette of France; and the latter, as giving an authentic account of a man of high eminence in literature. In ſome reſpects allied to biography is *Lavater's ſecret Journal of a Self-Obſerver* §; an eccentric work, but containing many traits illuſtrative of the hiſtory of human nature, and ſome curious particulars reſpecting an author, the ſingularity of whoſe works has made him an object of much public notice.

Antiquities.

Nothing can more properly take the lead in this department than the volume publiſhed by the learned *Society of Antiquaries* ‖. This volume is the eleventh, which, if it be not ſo replete with important matter, as ſome of the former may have been, contains enough to juſtify its publication and preſerve the credit of the work. The fifth number of *Miſcellaneous Antiquities* ¶ owes its importance to the efforts of *Mr. Denne*,

* No. VI. p. 642. † No. III. p. 325. ‡ No. IV. p. 453. § No. IV. p. 421. ‖ No. II. p. 155. III. 231. ¶ No. IV. p. 389.

who,

who, though he has ſaid ſome things haſtily, has inveſtigated others with ſucceſs. Of a ſimilar character is *Mr. Newcome's Hiſtory of the Abbey of St. Alban* *. The author, on enquiry, we find not to be a young man; and we truſt he will pardon a conjecture, which at leaſt will prove to him that no perſonal motives could lead us either to cenſure or commend his performance.

Topography.

The magnitude of the ſcale, on which *Mr. Nichols's* topographical *Hiſtory and Antiquities of Leiceſterſhire* † is planned, muſt aſtoniſh thoſe who have not conſidered how many objects ſuch a work may properly embrace. A county hiſtory, however, in which ſo many of theſe objects are included, ſo few omitted, and all particulars ſo diligently elucidated, is a new phænomenon in this branch of literature; and, we doubt not, that when the whole ſhall be completed, it will be conſidered as forming an indiſpenſable part of every conſiderable library. Whether future inveſtigators in the ſame line will have ſpirit and perſeverance to follow the example thus ſet, is a problem which time only can reſolve. No ſmall ſhare of theſe neceſſary qualities has, however, been evinced in the conduct of a contemporary work, the *Deſcription of the Country from thirty to forty Miles round Mancheſter* ‡. Here we find Mr. Stockdale, the publiſher, amaſſing materials and directing his favourite project, at the enormous expence of between three and four thouſand pounds; and Dr. Aikin, giving form and conſiſtency to the whole, and producing from it a well connected and elegant work. It ſhould ſeem that literature is not neglected by her natural allies, when we conſider that of theſe two great and expenſive publications, the one is altogether compiled and

* No. IV. p. 440. V. 507. † No. II. p. 101. III. 261.
‡ No. V. p. 461. VI. 592.

written

written by a printer, the other projected and completed by the ſpirit of a bookſeller. The account of a ſmall town, compriſed in a ſix ſhilling octavo, ſhrinks into nothing by the ſide of theſe vaſt works, yet ſhould *Mr. Price's Hiſtory of Leominſter* * be mentioned, as poſſeſſing merits of a ſimilar kind, though in a humbler form and inferior degree.

Travels.

Travellers continue to aſſert their privilege of telling their tales in their own way, " of hair-breadth ſcapes," &c. and the public ſeems very indulgently diſpoſed to give them audience. *Captain Taylor* †, however, the firſt traveller whom we noticed in this volume, inſtead of attempting to make the countries through which he has paſſed

Live in deſcription, and look green in *proſe*,

contents himſelf with the humbler office of aſcertaining the moſt convenient routes, and marking ſtages, and diſtances. His main object, of facilitating the communication with India over land, is certainly of national importance; and we truſt that ſo much of his plan as may appear conducive to public benefit, will be, or perhaps has been, adopted by authority. The anonymous *Letters from Scandinavia* ‡ proceed from a lively, rather than a profound, traveller; and the *Gleanings* of *Mr. Pratt* §, though entertaining, are marked with all the well-known peculiarities of the gleaner. The *Travels of Mr. Owen* ‖ are written in a more claſſical ſtyle, but, as we obſerved in ſpeaking of them, are rather ingenious eſſays compoſed on the ſubject of the places he chanced to viſit, than either a narrative of events, or an exact deſcription of objects. *Mrs. Wollſtonecraft*, with much inflated affectation of fine writing, and much idle pretence to philoſophy,

* No. VI. p. 695. † *On Communication with India.* No. II. p. 136. ‡ No. IV. p. 381. § No. V. p. 487. ‖ No. V. p. 540.

has

has mixed in her *Letters from Sweden* *, many particulars that are agreeable and ſome that are intereſting. Had ſhe been fortunate enough to eſcape the philoſophical infection, ſhe might have been a good writer, as well as a more uſeful member of ſociety; but there is as much bad taſte as bad morality, in the philoſophy of French Deiſts, by which her mind has been perverted. The travels of this lady bring us, by a very natural tranſition, to

POLITICS.

Here, as uſual, we have had no ſmall ſupply of publications, but more perhaps than ordinary which deſerve recapitulation. The political work of the greateſt extent and importance, which we have lately ſeen, is *Mr. Plowden's Church and State*, our remarks on which commenced in a former volume †. This book though, according to our opinions, not entirely unexceptionable, contains the reſult of much reading, much thought, and conſiderable ſagacity: nor can it fail to be conſulted by any perſons who ſhall hereafter undertake to treat the ſubjects there inveſtigated. An anonymous book, entitled *Philoſophical Sketches of the Principles of Society and Government* ‡, detained our attention, in the enſuing month, far beyond the proportion of its bulk. Seldom, very ſeldom, have we ſeen ſo much originality of thought united with ſo much ſoundneſs of judgment; and our hope is, that the author, at whom we now gueſs, though we did not when we reviewed his book, will be encouraged to avow his name, and continue his lucubrations. *M. Mercier's Fragments of Politics and Hiſtory* §, which ſome perſon has thought it worth while to tranſlate, contain a mixture of ingenious, acute, and bold obſervations, not all of which are found, but all deli-

* No. VI. p. 602. † Vol. VI. p. 595. Of this Vol. No. II. p. 138. ‡ No. III. p. 221. § No. I. p. 55.

vered

vered with the eaſe and eloquence characteriſtic of him, and of his countrymen in general. The remaining works in this claſs, though they do not riſe above the dignity of pamphlets, have, many of them, a juſt claim to diſtinction. Foremoſt in this line ſtand the *Conſiderations upon the State of public Affairs at the beginning of the Year* 1796 *, a tract which, with an eloquence by no means common, and a perſpicacity that is ſtill leſs ſo, pierces the gloom which involves the political hemiſphere; and reaſons on cauſes and probable effects, in a way which, if it ſhould not prove infallible, muſt ever be eſteemed judicious. Of *Mr. Burke's Pamphlet* †, or the anſwerers of it, there can be little occaſion to ſpeak. The merits and defects of the former muſt be obvious to every reader; and, though they gave occaſion to the others, will not preſerve them from a ſpeedy oblivion. *M. Calonne* ‡ and *M. d' Ivernois* §, both writing with great ability on the ſubject of French finance, have had the topic of their diſpute cut from beneath their feet by the ſword of conqueſt, which, by bringing in contributions of a different kind, has baffled all their modes of calculation. *Mr. Macdonald*, writing on the private virtues which conduce to public happineſs, or, as he has entitled his pamphlet, *Thoughts on the public Duties of private Life* ‖. merited our approbation, and the repetition of it. *The Thoughts on the Engliſh Government* ¶, attributed to Mr. Reeves, though very generally deemed exceptionable in one or two paſſages, contained many ſound, and many ingenious and uſeful remarks. They were defended in two very able tracts; one anonymous, and entitled *A Vindication of the Privilege of the People, &c.* **, and the other by the Rev. J. Brand, *A Defence of the Pamphlet attributed to J. Reeves, Eſq.* †† &c. and thus this conteſt, which political differences blew into a flame, may be

* No. III. p. 281. † No. III. p. 299. ‡ No. IV. p. 434.
§ No. IV. p. 435. ‖ No. II. p. 204. ¶ No. I. p. 83.
** No. IV. p. 439. †† No. IV. p. 440.

ſuffered

ſuffered to ſleep, with the additional ſanction of a jury in behalf of the real or ſuppoſed author. *Mr. Morgan** and *Mr. Vanſittart*†, ſtand in our pages like bane and antidote,

> This in a moment brings us to our end,
> But this informs us we ſhall never die,

at leaſt not by the death which the other predicts: let thoſe who are qualified judge between them. Some good obſervations were to be found in a tract, entitled *A Warning Voice to the People of England*‡, on the two bills; and another anonymous writer, who ſtyled himſelf, *A near Obſerver*§, proved that he was not deſtitute of talents for obſervation. The *Suffolk Freeholder* addreſſes *A ſecond Letter to Mr. Sheridan*¶, with an acuteneſs which we had commended in the firſt; but which, perhaps, is counterbalanced by the ſpirit evinced on the other ſide, in *A Whig's Apology for his Conſiſtency*‖: a tract that, at leaſt, deſerves conſideration; and, if it ſhould tend at all to moderate the violence of parties, by ſhowing what a Whig *may* mean who oppoſes the preſent war, muſt be deemed uſeful. Our old acquaintance, *Peter Porcupine*, of Philadelphia, diverted us extremely by his very witty *Bone to Gnaw for the Democrats***, and we endeavoured to communicate the amuſement to our readers; but we are ſorry to find that this pamphlet ſtill continues to exiſt only on American paper, and conſequently is not eaſy to be had at all in England.

Political Œconomy,

To thoſe who are ſtudious of that very important point, the comfort and advantage of the induſtrious poor, we cannot in juſtice omit to recommend the very able book of *Mr. Davies*, of Barkham, entitled

* In his *Facts*, No. IV. p. 437. † Ibid. ‡ No. I. p. 85.
§ No. II. p. 203. ¶ No. IV. p. 442 ‖ No. III. p. 323.
** No. III. p. 241.

The

*The Caſe of Labourers in Huſbandry ſtated**. A ſmall tract, *On the Propriety of eſtabliſhing Schools for Spinning*†, is alſo connected with another branch of the ſame ſubject, and may afford ſeveral uſeful hints. *The Revenues of the Church*, an important part of political œconomy, are diſcuſſed with vigour and ſagacity, in an *Eſſay*, to which we gave rather an extended conſideration‡: and *The Police of the Metropolis*, forms the ſubject of a book by a ſagacious and active magiſtrate §, which, if attended to as it appears to deſerve, will probably lead the way to ſome regulations of the utmoſt advantage to the public.

Law.

On this topic we have at preſent but little to report. Mr. *Serj. Runnington's* book *on Ejectment*‖, and Mr. *Anſtruther's Reports*¶, deſerve to be well received by the profeſſion. Mr. *Chriſtian's* edition of *Blackſtone's Commentaries***, notwithſtanding the incongruity of adorning it with cuts, is well edited and annotated. They who poſſeſs either *Burn's*†† or *Williams's Juſtice*‡‡, will doubtleſs think it neceſſary to take the *Appendix* to the one, or the Continuation of the other, to render the works complete. Law books are uſually in a regular courſe of progreſſion; as new laws are framed, they muſt keep pace with the improvements.

Natural Philosophy.

The Philoſophical Tranſactions of the Royal Society of London, always deſerve the attention of the public. In our preſent volume, an account is given of the firſt part of the publication, for the year 1795§§.

* No. II. p. 130. † No. VI. p. 694. ‡ No. V. p. 494. § *Mr. Colquhoun*, No. VI. p. 637. ‖ No. I. p. 23. ¶ No. II. p. 202. ** No. II. p. 201. †† No. VI. p. 678. ‡‡ Ibid. §§ No. I. p. 29.

Bent's Journal of *Meteorology** may be conſidered as a companion to that, and other works containing obſervations. *Dr. Hutton's Diſſertation on Light*, &c.† will probably be thought deſerving of examination by the ſtudious in theſe branches of learning, though after the futility we have diſcovered in his ſyſtem, we can by no means recommend it as a book of ſound philoſophy. Of *Botanical* books we have noticed only the *Supplement* to Dr. Woodville's *Medical Botany*‡; but the union of a material branch of that ſtudy with chemiſtry, may be ſeen moſt happily illuſtrated in the *Treatiſe of Lord Dundonald*§. *The Natural Hiſtory* of this kingdom receives an agreeable illuſtration from Mr. *Donovan's* elegant account of *Britiſh Birds*‖; which to prints, drawn and coloured with a conſiderable degree of neatneſs and accuracy, adds ſhort and characteriſtic deſcriptions of each bird. The natural hiſtory of the horſe, in a part particularly eſſential to practical uſe, is very capitally illuſtrated in a work of uncommon ſplendor, publiſhed by *Mr. Freeman*, and entitled *Obſervations on the Mechaniſm of the Horſe's Foot*¶. This is a book which, in point of expence, none but a man of fortune could venture to undertake, and which few men of fortune could have executed with the minuteneſs and accuracy of knowledge which is there diſplayed.

Medicine, &c.

In the medical department, if we have few works of great extent to record, there are ſome which, from their ſubjects, bear a value very diſproportionate to their magnitude. Of this kind is the tract of *Dr. Carmichael Smyth* on the *Jail Diſtemper***. In this a diſcovery was announced, which has ſince been fur-

* No. II. p. 211. † No. IV. p. 351. ‡ No. I. p. 54.
§ No. III. p. 288. ‖ No. III. p. 279. ¶ No. IV. p. 348.
** No. II. p. 121.

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ther purſued, and promiſes to be of great importance: that fumigating with the marine acid is highly efficacious, in deſtroying the miaſmata of putrid infection. In the ſame number we noticed a medical work, by a clergyman, on a benevolent plan, and ſo executed as to be likely to anſwer the end propoſed. It is entitled *A Guide to Health*, and is the work of the *Rev. Joſeph Townſend**, who publiſhed, ſome time ago, an approved account of a journey in Spain. Of this book the intention is, among other things, to be an aid to clergymen, whoſe inclination to be uſeful to their poor pariſhioners, in time of ſickneſs, has ſometimes gone beyond their knowledge; and to private families, where proper medical aſſiſtance cannot eaſily be procured. A practitioner of the name of *Davidſon*, writing *on the pulmonary Syſtem*†, throws out an idea which, at leaſt, deſerves attention; namely, that the diminution of the quantity of liquid taken by patients afflicted with the hæmorrhage in the lungs, or other diſeaſes of that organ, is very eſſential to their recovery. *Dr. George Fordyce* has continued his very ſcientific enquiry into the nature of fever, by a *ſecond Diſſertation*‡, in which he particularly treats of the regular tertian intermittent. The perſevering attention of a man ſo well known for acuteneſs, and extent of practical knowledge, cannot fail to throw great light on the important ſubject of fever. The *Medical Commentaries* of *Dr. Duncan*§ have now received their completion at the tenth decade, Vol. II. But from their aſhes a new Phœnix is to ariſe, under the title of *Medical Annals*, in which the Doctor hopes for the aſſiſtance of his ſon. *Surgery.* On the ſubject *of Strictures*, the *Practical Obſervations* of *Mr. Home*‖ appear to have thrown a light of great value, by illuſtrating, confirming, and improving the practice of the late Mr. Hunter, in the treatment of thoſe obſtinate complaints.

* No. II. p. 184. † No. III. p. 252. ‡ No. V. p. 521.
§ No. VI. p. 644. ‖ No. IV. p. 446.

POETRY.

We ſhall not long be detained by the remarks which this diviſion of our preface will demand. We noticed, in our firſt number, though ſtill ſomewhat tardily, a volume of *Miſcellaneous Poetry, in Engliſh and Latin*, by *Mr. Reeve**: and we allowed to both parts conſiderable merit. *Mr. William Aſhburnham's Elegiac Sonnets*†, and other poems, may be read with pleaſure. In the *Foreſt Walks*, by *Mr. Giſborne*‡, we found ourſelves obliged to commend the moraliſt rather than the poet. The very reſpectable author appears to have a taſte for poetry, but not a decided genius, nor a very accurate ear. Of *Miſs Seward's Poems*§, through indulgence to a female writer, we ſaid at firſt rather more than they deſerved, we may therefore ſay the leſs at preſent: they have ſome merits, but more faults. The *Political Dramatiſt*‖, the production, in our opinion, of the unknown author of the Purſuits of Literature, has the general characteriſtics of that indefatigable ſatiriſt: poetical ſpirit and claſſical knowledge, without ſcrupulous correctneſs, or the exact diſcrimination when to quit a topic he has taken. The elegant tribute to royal genius, paid by *Sir J. B. Burges*, in his poem on *the Birth and Progreſs of Love*¶, has had the uſual effect of ſuch exertions, that of drawing the attacks of Envy upon its author: we ſee no reaſon, however, to retract a tittle of our praiſe. In a ſatire of a very peculiar kind, entitled *the Seaſick Minſtrel***, *Mr. Treſham* has evinced that he can wield the pen of Poetry as well as the pencil of the ſiſter-art: and if he will condeſcend to profit by the hints which we threw out, we doubt not he will acquire ſtill greater commendation. The *Muſæ Etonenſes*†† afforded a pleaſing proof of the ſucceſsful attention paid to claſſical compoſition in that famous ſeminary. In the dramatic line we do not recollect any thing that

* No. I. p. 19. † No. II. p. 193. ‡ No. III. p. 252.
§ No. IV. p. 404. ‖ No. IV. p. 427. ¶ No. V. p. 475.
** No. VI. p. 598. †† No. VI. p. 625.

deſerves recapitulation, except a tranſlation of *Schiller's Cabal and Love**, and of that unfortunately the German Muſes, not the Britiſh, muſt have the praiſe. Our own theatre is certainly in the loweſt ſtate for original compoſition that it ever experienced.

Novels.

A few, and but a few novels, that deſerve to be exempted from the general fate, have lately met our eye. Of theſe, the firſt that occurs in this volume is *Montalbert*, by *Mrs. C. Smith*†; a novel which, though it cannot rank with the firſt in that claſs of compoſition, is certainly above mediocrity. A lower praiſe muſt not be given to *Mrs. Inchbald's Nature and Art*‡, in which, if that amiable writer had not met with ſome deſigning perſons, who inſtilled unjuſt prejudices into her mind, there would be nothing that could merit cenſure. A writer who, in one form or another, frequently appears before the public§, has given us a novel, called *Angelina*, which is entertaining, though not faultleſs; and will be read with pleaſure, though it might have been written with more ſkill. *Hermſprong*‖ alſo has merits and faults ſufficient to attract attention, and thereby will probably eſcape the worſt lot that can befal a work of genius, oblivion.

Republished Poetry.

For perſons who have eyes adapted to the uſe of a very ſmall print, *Dr. Anderſon's* collective edition of *the Britiſh Poets*¶, will be found a very cheap and convenient publication. Beginning earlier, and continued later than the edition of Johnſon, it compriſes a much larger liſt of writers; and the biographical notices prefixed to each are ſufficient for general information, and drawn up with judgment. Of the *Paradiſe Regained*, a kind of *Variorum* edition has been pub-

* No. III. p. 314. † No. II. p. 127. ‡ No. III. p. 261.
§ Mrs. Robinſon. No. IV. p. 429. ‖ No. IV. p. 430.
¶ No. II. p. 172.

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liſhed by the Rev. *Mr. Dunſter**; and whether it produces the effect deſired by him or not, that of making the poem more generally read, will always be honourable to him as an editor. *Dr. Aikin* has given an elegant ſmall edition of *the Spleen*, and other poems by *Matthew Green*†, and has prefixed a judicious eſſay. The *Reliques* of *ancient Engliſh Poetry*, by *Dr. Percy*, *Biſhop of Dromore*‡, that eſtabliſhed favourite with all admirers of our native Muſes, has attained a fourth edition, under the care of his nephew, the *Rev. Thomas Percy*; and the diſſertations in it have received conſiderable augmentation.

Editions of Classics.

From the Clarendon preſs at Oxford is iſſuing, at preſent, a moſt important work, an edition of *Plutarch*, with the notes and apparatus of *Profeſſor Wyttenbach*, of *Amſterdam*§; a man whoſe life has been in great meaſure devoted to the ſtudy of this author, and the preparation of his edition. Two volumes in quarto, correſponding with four in octavo iſſued at the ſame time, have already appeared, and we have reaſon to believe that the work is proceeding with due ſpirit. The editor begins with the moral or miſcellaneous works of the author. A neat edition of *Bion and Moſchus*, by Mr. *G. Wakefield*‖, is creditable to his editorial talents; and muſt conclude our preſent account of claſſical works.

Miscellanies.

Under this head we muſt neceſſarily place the *Tranſactions of the Royal Iriſh Academy*¶, as they contain not only Philoſophy, but Belles Lettres Antiquities, Metaphyſics, &c. The publication is certainly creditable to the inſtitution. A book, entitled *Varieties of Literature***, with ſeveral things that ought to have been omitted, contains alſo ſeveral that deſerved to be collected, and may, on the whole, be praiſed with ſome exception, and recommended with

* No. V. p. 504. † No. II. p. 194. ‡ No. III. p. 301. § No. I. p. 59. ‖ Vol. V. p. 469. ¶ No. II. p. 186, and No. IV. p. 385.
** No. I. p 41.

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ſome caution. *Mr. Repton's Sketches and Hints on Landſcape Gardening*†, would, if any additional recommendation were wanting, eſtabliſh his credit in the profeſſion which he has aſſumed, and to which he has given a name. The death-blow to a daring, and very ill-conducted impoſition, was given by *Mr. Malone*‡, in his *Inquiry into the authenticity of certain Papers*, &c. nor can any thing be objected to his book, except perhaps a few redundancies. A very reſpectable work on Perſian Literature, by *Mr. Ouſely*, under the title of *Perſian Miſcellanies*§, ſtood in the front of our volume; though reſerved, by its nature, nearly to the cloſe of our recapitulation. The book contains many valuable particulars, and is intended as preparatory to another publication of a kindred nature. *Heraldry* has been obliged to Mr. *Brydſon* for a moſt claſſical and elegant account of its origin and progreſs, entitled *a ſummary View of Heraldry*‖, in peruſing which, the reader not partial to thoſe ſtudies will frequently be inclined to wonder, that ſo much liberal amuſement can be furniſhed by ſuch a ſubject. *Mr. Maſon's Letters on Church Muſic*¶, exhibit a writer of great talents exerciſing his powers upon a ſubject which he has carefully ſtudied, and, notwithſtanding a few peculiarities, in which he will not perhaps find many followers, his book is ſuch as the circumſtances above-ſtated would lead us to expect. *The Repertory of Arts and Sciences***, in its ſecond and third volumes, continues to give a very ſatisfactory report of what is moſt valuable in the inventions and improvements of the day; and certainly deſerves the patronage of all whoſe curioſity is directed to thoſe objects. Such is the amount of our preſent recital, which, we truſt, will not be found leſs creditable to Britiſh Literature than thoſe by which it has been preceded.

† No. I. p. 64. ‡ No. VI. p. 630. § No. I. p. 1. ‖ No. III. p. 247. ¶ No. III. p. 271. ** No. I. p. 93.

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